

No place like home



Newlyweds live happily in a dream come true

EVERY married person feels qualified to give advice to newlyweds, and the jokey talks are one of the main features of wedding receptions. But when Margaret and Brian Oliver got married three months ago the experts were quieter than usual. For they were the spastic couple, deeply in love, whose personal problems and thwarted hopes of marriage were given nationwide publicity when the new film "Like Other People" was shown on B.B.C. television.

It was the TV programme and publicity in Spastics News that brought their case to the notice of the Inskip League of Friendship, which offered the self-contained specially-adapted flat that meant they could go ahead and get married. And it was on a continuing wave of publicity that Margaret and Brian were wed three weeks later at Amersham Register Office.

The experts were quiet because their problems seemed to be so enormous. Bride and groom were confined to wheelchairs, although Margaret can walk a little. Margaret was the most articulate — Brian having a severe speech impediment — but her hands were unsteady, making delicate tasks almost im-

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Just like other people, Margaret and Brian relax in their own home in the picture above. Left is a flashback to their wedding day, after a love story shared by the nation's television viewers.



Mrs. Pauline Morrow and Margaret met when they were residents at the Society's Ponds Home for spastics. Now they are neighbours with homes of their own. They are pictured with Mr. Malcolm Doney, chairman of the Inskip Housing Authority which provided their flats.

Society offers help to Uganda Asians

MR. James Loring, Director of The Spastics Society, has offered to mount a "rescue operation" for handicapped Asian men, women and children arriving in England as refugees from Uganda.

In a letter to Sir Charles Cunningham, Chairman of the Ugandan Asian Resettlement Board, he asked that all families should be

informed of the facilities that the Society is prepared to offer to any spastic person, or to the parents of a spastic child.

These would include short-term child care in some of the Society's Family Help Units based in Nottingham, Bury St. Edmunds, Southampton and Plymouth; where possible, places for spastic Ugandan children in its special schools; and small grants for the pur-

chase of aids and equipment for the handicapped, such as calipers or wheelchairs.

The Society could also offer handicapped Asians advice on the local authorities with most residential places available for the care of the handicapped, general help from its widespread social service force, and the assistance of its Careers Advisory and Employment Placement Officers in finding suitable jobs.

Said Mr. Loring: "We are

cutting across red tape to offer a helping hand to spastic refugees from Uganda as a matter of high priority.

"We are anxious to do everything we can, within the limits of our resources, to assist them to find a place in the community. Any spastic Asian or parent of a spastic who contacts our Family Services and Assessment Centre in London can be assured of a warm and practical response to their requests."

spastics NEWS

THE NEWSPAPER OF THE SPASTICS SOCIETY

OCTOBER, 1972

New Series, Price 2½p

High flying Fred earns his wings of courage



"I don't let the fact I'm a spastic stop me from doing anything"

SEATED at the controls of his glider, 37-year-old Fred Loggins has the freedom of the air as he sails and swoops thousands of feet above the Lincolnshire fens, proud of his new pilot's licence, and of his philosophy: "I have never let the fact that I am a spastic stop me from doing anything. There is always a way to succeed."

Fred persevered for three years in the fight against his disabilities to fly a glider to the standard high enough to qualify to go solo. A glider needs a very light touch on the controls, and Fred—who could not walk until he was four—had to overcome the muscular spasms of a spastic to fly safely and skilfully.

But he succeeded and when he had completed three perfect solo flights and three perfect landings, he received his pilot's badge to the cheers of his friends and fellow members at Peterborough and Spalding Gliding Club. They praised him for his magnifi-

cent achievement against tremendous odds, but Fred just says he did what he set out to do and that's good enough.

Fred has always been a bit of a high flyer. He taught himself to drive and passed the test first time, he travels the Continent on strenuous camping holidays, and he was a whizz in his speedboat—he even tried water skiing—until he took up gliding, and the sea took second place to the thrill of flying. And he has another claim to fame. Not only is he almost certainly the first spastic glider pilot, but the first to see the Loch Ness monster! The sighting occurred on holiday in Scotland and because of the resulting publicity, Fred has been teased about it ever since. But he remains convinced that he and three friends actually saw "Nessie" herself.

In his working life, Fred is an essential man to the people of his home village, Holbeach Grove, as he owns and runs the village shop and petrol station. While he is gliding,

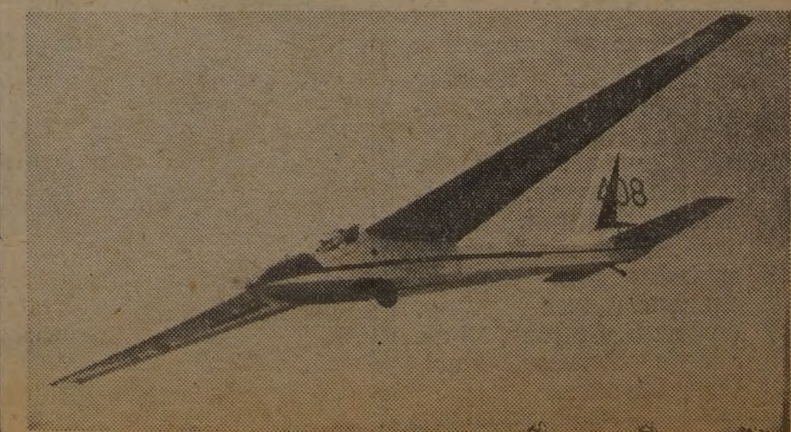
his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Loggins, look after his thriving business. They are proud of Fred, but not surprised at his latest achievement.

"He's so determined," said his mother. "If there is something he wants to do, he'll just go on till he finds a way to do it. He's always been the same."

Now Fred has ambitions to fly a powered aircraft, but when he went for the essential medical certificate, the doctor took one look at him and asked: "Did you come here by invalid carriage?" Says Fred: "I realised I wouldn't get anywhere there, and they wouldn't consider me because I am a spastic. Invalid carriage indeed! Still, one day..."

Fred, a cheerful smiling man, makes light of his difficulties, and is diffident about his achievements. He says he likes to do the things people say he can't, so that second licence might be his yet.

Pictures by courtesy of Lincolnshire Free Press.





Pictured above at the conference, which was sponsored by The Spastics Society are: first picture, Kenneth Bayes in action as chairman of a discussion group; centre, John Simmons of Southampton with writer Ann Shearer, and right, Joan Rush and Jackie Connolly from Slough.

Pictures by Peter Reuter.



"Please consult us when you are planning our lives"

WHAT sort of services should we be providing for mentally handicapped people? Campaign for the Mentally Handicapped has held a conference at The Spastics Society's Castle

Priory, Staff Training College, to find out what they themselves think — the first ever in this country — and in September published a report of their views.

The 22 delegates came from hospitals, hostels and

their own family homes, and fell well into the middle to top range of people we call mentally handicapped; some had additional disabilities like deafness, blindness and physical handicap.

"Some people", says the introduction to the report, "say that mentally handicapped people can't be expected to choose for themselves, that they need to be told what is good for them. This conference shows just how wrong these prejudices can be."

It points out that coming to the conference at all was brave for many of the hospital delegates who had had to cope with half-joking admonitions from staff about what they were going to say; the delegates themselves decided that no names should be used against comments in the report, in case this could lead to trouble when it was published. Many delegates, especially from the hospitals, were critical of the way they had to live now. They spoke about—

- Lack of privacy: Some had to live in large wards: one woman used to wait until the other women were asleep if she felt like crying, so that they wouldn't hear her.

- Staff who wouldn't listen and didn't consult them about their own futures; one woman said that at her hospital, people were sometimes taken straight from the workroom to pack their things and leave for a hostel they had never had the chance to visit first.

- Bad pay: one man worked around his hospital for 55 hours a week and got less than £2. No-one at the conference, except for the few in outside employment, got more than £2 a week.

- Lack of freedom and independence to do as they liked in their spare time: One man said he had permission from the hospital doctor to visit the pub but that the nurses wouldn't let him.

More choice

Delegates wanted: choice in who they lived with — preferably five or six friends in an ordinary house their own bedroom, or to share with one other person; more independence; more part in running their own home instead of having things done for them; more choice in work; more help in getting outside jobs; better pay.

These are not unreasonable demands, the introduction to the report points out. It asks how justifiable our present plans for large hostels for mentally handicapped people, are when they say they would prefer to live with small groups of people they have chosen. It asks further, how

much extra handicap our present services are creating for people when we pay them so little and deny them any chance of comparing their own situation with that of other workers.

All the delegates thought the conference had been a success, and wanted another one. It shows, CMH believes, that authorities should consult mentally handicapped people for whom they are planning services. It also shows how arti-

ficial the dividing line between people we call "normal" and people we call "handicapped" can be if we make the effort to learn from them and listen to their views.

Other authorities, CMH believes, should now hold similar conferences for the people for whom they are creating services.

Copies of "Our Life" from Campaign for the Mentally Handicapped, 96, Portland Place, London W1. Price 50p.

What they really think:

LIVING

"I like it, but I wouldn't want to be in a hospital all my life, really. I'd like to be out, you know, out of that, living in the country."

"I don't mind sharing a room but I'd rather have my own room . . . You can listen to your radio on your own more, and you haven't got nobody disturbing you."

"There are much more things at home than in the hostel. You can't do what you like there. You have to go to bed at 10. If you do anything wrong you have to go to bed early."

RULES AND PUNISHMENTS

"If the staff ask, you've got to give answer to it. If you don't do as you're told, you know what'll happen, you'll get your punishment. Sometimes I don't do what I'm told, we're very disobedient at times. Then I get punished. I get sent straight up to bed. Yes, if they tell me to go, I go."

STAFF

"I'd enjoy eating with the staff because you can talk to the staff after you've eaten your dinner, and have a chat on what you've been doing in your work, get together and make it like a family."

"They don't tell you about changes until the last minute. Or they don't really tell you at all, and it just comes round, things you'd like to know. If you go for a medical examination, you'd like to know how much you weighed, how you were, how you were getting on. You don't know whether you're going to die next week or whether you'll live to be 100. I feel I'd like to know."

WORK

"Some people, you go to the house and they say 'Oh, she'll be one of the family,' and as soon as the social worker's back's turned you're a—a maid or something like that. I went to a house once, about five years ago, and they said I was going to have all this and that, and as soon as the social worker went, there I was, scrubbing floors, polishing. I mean, I didn't go to do that work . . ."

LEISURE

"Leisure? We don't get much of that to talk about." We can go out every evening so long as the staff know where we're going. But we've got other jobs, you know, I mean we can't get out, we've got laundry to do and other jobs."



Pictured above outside the Spastics Treatment Centre in St. Albans Road, Watford, are two girls who are helping to keep the place open.

Jane Walker (left) and Tracy Seabrook, both aged 11, raised £22 for the centre with a garden fete held during the school holidays.

The girls' interest in spastics arose after a visit to the centre and a first-hand view of the work being done there.

(Picture by courtesy of Watford Evening Echo)

Two more young helpers are Nina Richardson,

Thank heaven for little girls

11, and Darren Thornton, 9, of Smithies, near Barnsley, Yorkshire, who recently organised a summer fair in aid of spastics.

Besides setting up stalls for the sale of second-hand goods, the two girls arranged a fancy dress parade, races, competitions and a treasure hunt.

Their efforts raised over £33.

(Picture by courtesy of Barnsley Chronicle)



Stamps buy her mobility

RED Cross members from Hoo, in Kent, have collected 154 books of trading stamps to buy a Chairmobile for a local spastic woman, Josephine Rowan.

The Chairmobile is an electrically-powered wheelchair designed by Lord Snowdon to give maximum mobility indoors.

Miss Rowan, who can walk only short distances with help and has restricted movement in her arms, is secretary of the Mothers' Union branch. She also does embroidery for local charity fund-raising events and types an article every month for her church magazine.

She said about the chair, "I am delighted at the wonderful response. People have been so kind to me."

Mr. Ben Wiles, who has raised £1,430 for spastics while licensee of The Dolphin public house, Kingston, Surrey, has retired, with his wife Doris, to Selsey.

FOR SALE: Wrigley electric wheelchair, attendant controlled. Encased engine; 7" wheels, internal brakes. Excellent condition, little used. Price £100, which includes new battery, charger, tyre pump. Apply: G. Stapley, 13 St. Mary's Terrace, Hastings, Sussex.



NORTHAMPTON and County Spastics Society has given a new specially-adapted ambulance to the Northamptonshire County Social Services Department.

The vehicle can carry 11 passengers and some of the seats can be removed to make room for wheelchairs.

In the picture, Mr. Ken Gardner, Chairman of Northampton and County Spastics Society, hands over the keys of the ambulance to Mrs. Betty Saxby, Chairman of the County Council Social Services Committee. (Picture by courtesy of Northampton Chronicle and Echo).

The children who need very special toys

THE special needs of handicapped children have been sadly neglected when it comes to toys, thinks the Educational Supply Association, which has been looking after the school needs of children for nearly 100 years. In the past 10 years it has seen a dramatic rise in the demand for toys designed to widen the imagination and broaden the skills of able-bodied children, but

handicapped youngsters, who perhaps need the stimulus of the right play-things even more, have not been catered for to the same extent.

To fulfil the need it has introduced "Play Specials," a comprehensive range of toys which have been chosen for their special play value for

handicapped children. Many of them have been designed to overcome a handicap that precludes normal active play, others are designed to draw children isolated by their disabilities out into the normal world. But most important of all, from the children's point of view, all provide endless hours of pleasure and fun.

In introducing the range—and just a few of the many toys are pictured here—the Association declares:

"All children need to play, it is a vital part of their development. Through the fun of his play activities, discovering the water from the tap, the pebbles on the beach, the child learns about the nature of the world in which he lives and about himself as a unique individual. Seeing, hearing, talking, walking, thinking—all are encouraged by play. Any handicap, mental or physical frustrates this ability to explore and the child relies on us to provide stimulating toys and play experiences to help him develop his full potential, however limited.

"The true nature of play seems to be constant—all through history, in all places, and all times, we find examples of rattles, dolls, carts... Fun, toys and play are elemental, timeless—they should be part of the lives of all children—they are not trivialities, but the basis of all future learning. Without them a child is indeed handicapped.

For further information about Play Specials write to The Educational Supply Association, P.O. Box 22, Pinnacles, Harlow, Essex. The Association would also welcome comments, criticism and ideas for future Play Specials.



TOPSY GIANT JIGSAW. Largest easy-to-handle jigsaw that we know. Designed originally for children with hearing and speech handicaps to help self recognition of parts of body. Completely basic—no distracting detail. Already proved highly successful as a shape and co-ordination toy with many handicapped children. Six very large wooden pieces to peg on big board, 22" wide x 32" high. Clothes can be cut out of the self-adhesive PVC sheets provided. Compartment at back for storing all the bits and bobs. The board is large enough for use in front of a class. Price £7.45.

SADDLE SEAT ENGINE AND DESK. Designed specifically for spastic children who are unable to bend at the hips, the engine can be used as a seat or as a means of getting about. It can be adjusted to different heights, and the "forward only" action converts the rocking of the child's body into forward motion. This action on back wheels can be flicked off to reverse engine. The sturdy desk has a cut-out front and a hand rail for spastic children to grip, this also forms a ledge to stop things from falling off. The height is adjustable, from 12" to 16", and there is a device for securing the engine at the desk. The top, 30" x 20", has a non-slip surface. Saddle Seat Engine £15.50, Desk £9.50.



PLAY BARREL. Great play activity equipment. A hide-out or tunnel for small crawlers. Active children roll on it and in it. Provides endless variety of social play. Indestructible tough plastic, light and portable. Overall diameter 22". 31" high. Price: £5.24.



SIMPLE JIGSAWS. Wooden tray jigsaws 9-12 pieces whole object or animal cut out of solid background. Screen printed on plywood. Also available for more skillful "puzzlers" as 25 pieces, semi-interlocking wooden jigsaws. Price 90p.



TRAFFIC PICTURE TRAY. Extra large wooden picture tray screen printed directly on to plywood, eight objects cut out of solid background and raised well proud for easy all-finger grip. Price £1.70.



GIANT PICTURE LOTTO. The first really large picture lotto. Brilliant colours, clear everyday subjects that children know, no unnecessary detail makes this a very important addition to the range of toys available to handicapped children. Ideal for those with conceptual problems, and good first social game for any child. Four strong boards laminated and wipeable. 36 cards. Price £2.25.



JOLLY ROCKER. A robust activity toy, virtually indestructible. Will hold four children, even more small ones. Ideal for older mentally handicapped children or adults. Reverses to form a table with seats. Knock down construction, nine sections easily bolted together to form a rigid unit. Weighs only 50 lb. Price £25.50.



BABY MIRROR. A very important toy with which the baby begins to discover himself. Double-sided, unbreakable, non-glass mirror, plastic frame, biteable, with finger holes for extra play value. 8" hexagonal. Price 85p.



GIANT PICTURE SNAP. Ideal for children with conceptual problems. Fun of shouting SNAP. The advantage of this game is that a handicapped child can win when playing with his family, which gives a terrific feeling of achievement and one-up-manship. 52 strong laminated cards. Price 99p.



TUNNEL PEGS. Very first "fitting" toy with added fun of tunnel play. The five easily handled, large, chunky wooden pegs need only whole hand grasp. Fit the pegs in the big holes, push them through the "tunnel" and watch their progress through the peg "windows". Encourages shape and colour recognition and co-ordination. Price £1.70.

James Loring, Director of The Spastics Society, writes a special article on his visit to Australia to attend meetings of international bodies concerned with the handicapped.

Society's work has a world wide significance

THE international work of the Society receives very little publicity despite the fact that it has a long history and extends over a wide field. Every year many hundreds of people from overseas visit our schools and centres and our headquarters at Park Crescent, London. Fitzroy Square with its Family Services and Assessment Centre also attracts many visitors. We also receive a very large number of enquiries from overseas, from parents, professional people, and other organisations. The Spastics Society also has its own publication group, Spastics International Medical Publications, whose journal, *Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology*, and other publications, command a worldwide circulation. Not surprisingly Spastics News also has its overseas fans, and I am frequently asked questions by overseas colleagues about events reported in the newspaper.

During the last few years the tempo and volume of our international work has increased and this is largely because the newly-founded International Cerebral Palsy Society, of which I am Honorary Secretary General, has its headquarters in London. Our international medical study groups and our international education seminars are known throughout the world and there are always more people willing to attend than there are places. When the International Cerebral Palsy Society was established in London it was possible to hand over to it some of the Society's international conference work. This enabled the conferences to be more broadly based and to give them a truly international character.

The latest development has been the organising by the I.C.P.S. Games and Recreation Group of the first European Spastics Games. These will almost certainly be followed in the near future by the first International Spastics Games. It is very difficult to quantify all this activity, but if it were undertaken by a single department, that department would probably require a staff of at least half a dozen.

Demanding

Perhaps the most demanding and interesting of the work as far as I am concerned personally is my attendances at international congresses and study groups. A great deal of my international work is done from behind an office desk at Park Crescent but when I go abroad and meet my colleagues from other countries as I did recently in Australia, and visit other centres, the whole of the work comes to life.

I went to Australia to attend the 5th International Seminar on Special Education at Melbourne, the Rehabilitation International Congress in Sydney, the Cerebral Palsy seminar at Mosman, and the various I.C.P.S. meetings. I had been asked to organise the cerebral palsy sessions of the International Congress, and I was very grateful to the organisers for giving me an opportunity to make a direct contribution to what is the most important congress in the world for the handicapped, and one which only takes place every three or four years.

It was my first visit to

paratively easy city for the handicapped.

The International Seminar itself was held in one of the Ministry of Education buildings and was organised by Mr. David Drummond. I found it difficult to get my bearings at the start because whereas in England most education conferences have a preponderance of women teachers amongst the participants, I was surprised to see that here they were mostly men. I discovered subsequently that a great many of the Australian participants were in fact education administrators. This produced some very interesting discussions on organisation but there seemed to be a lack of papers about specific teaching problems.

Education

I gave a paper on Conductive Education and the need for more closely co-ordinated therapy and education programmes for handicapped children, and my wife, who was with me and is a research worker engaged in a moral education project to do with handicapped children, gave a paper which dealt with the preliminary findings of her research.

The air journey from Melbourne to Sydney is about 600 miles and flying in a relatively light aircraft one is able to see a fair amount of the country-

side. On arrival in Sydney work really began. The Rehabilitation International Congress is usually a very large conference and this time was no exception. There were, I believe, about 1,600 people present.

I had been asked to organise the cerebral palsy sessions and I had been given three periods, during which I showed the film "Like Other People," gave a paper on "Sex and the Handicapped" and also took the chair for Mr. Derek Lancaster-Gaye, Assistant Director, Services, when he gave a paper on "Residential Care." These sessions were surprisingly well attended and two of them at least drew large numbers from other sessions. Although numerically cerebral palsy is not one of the most numerous of handicaps, the sessions always seem to attract large numbers of participants.

Our stand

The Society and the I.C.P.S. had an excellent stand in the Exhibition of Equipment and Appliances. This was organised by Mr. Lancaster-Gaye, who succeeded in obtaining orders for a large number of the Society's Newton wheelchairs.

In addition to taking part in the International Congress itself I also had undertaken to take the chair for an afternoon at a cerebral palsy seminar organised at the Mosman Centre by Mr. and Mrs. Neil McLeod. The achievements of the McLeods and their colleagues at Mosman are substantial. Not only have they created the well-known Centre Industries which provides a very good example of able-bodied and handicapped people working together in a profit-

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They pushed beds...



Members of Monmouth Young Farmers' Club, who won a charity bed race through the streets of the town. Left to right, they are: Philip Bowen, David Jones, Brian Carter, Glyn Edmunds, and "patient" Jenny Bater. Seven local branches of the Young Farmers' Club took part in the race, and the event raised £65 for the Monmouthshire Spastics Society.

They chose barrows...

A group of young men from Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, recently held a charity 'Wheelbarrow Marathon' around the local pubs. The participants travelled in pairs, one trundling the other in a wheelbarrow, and all drank a half-pint of beer at each pub they visited.

Through the generosity of sponsors and the co-operation of licensees in Old Beaconsfield, they raised £240. This was divided between the Society's Ponds Home for spastics, Seer Green, and the centre for spastic children run by the Wycombe and District Spastics Society.

Schoolchildren swim so disabled can ride

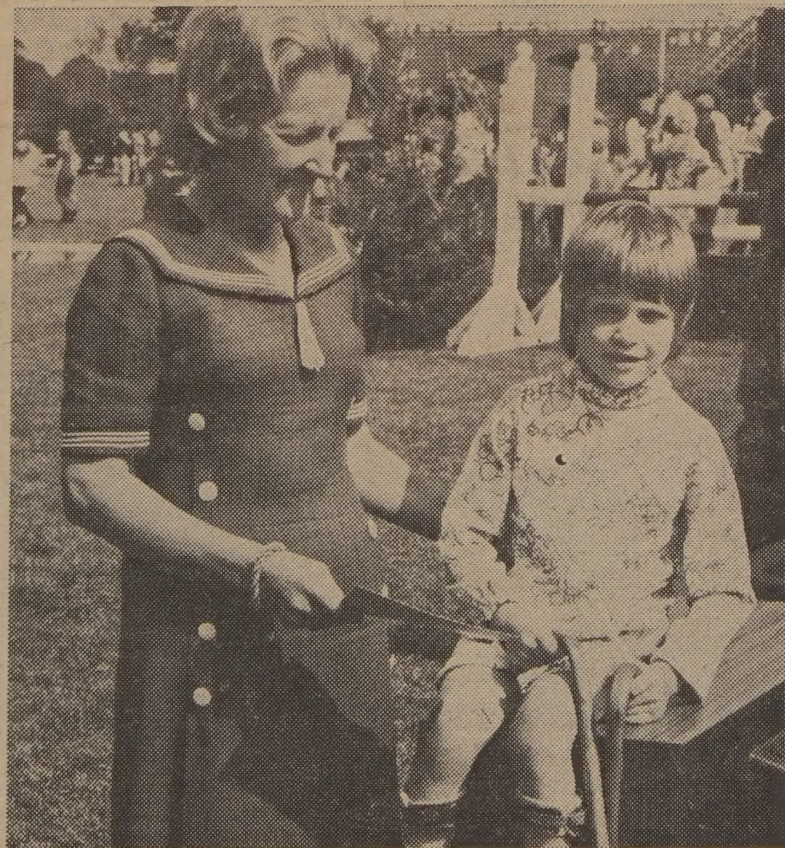
ANYONE who thinks that modern youth does not care should hear about the efforts of 4,556 boys and girls who have raised over £24,000 for the Riding for the Disabled Association. Since early this year 99 schools of every description in Britain—primary, high, grammar, private, comprehensive and public schools, plus three for physically handicapped children—have carried out sponsored swims.

It was one of the schools for the disabled, Birchfield School of Slough, which won a colour TV donated by Sussex well-wishers for the most money raised on handicap (£412 with 20 pupils). Yet another school for the disabled, Hangers Wood, S. Oxey, was third (£603 with 55 pupils). The handicap took into consideration amount, ages and number of pupils. Elstree School, Wolverhampton (£1,715) were second, and Queenswood, Hatfield (2,102) fourth.

The TV and other prizes were presented by the Duchess

of Norfolk, President of the Riding for the Disabled Association, at a television ceremony at the Hickstead all-England Jumping Course at the Schools Meeting. Disabled children riders from the RDA's Crabbet Park Group provided a guard of honour.

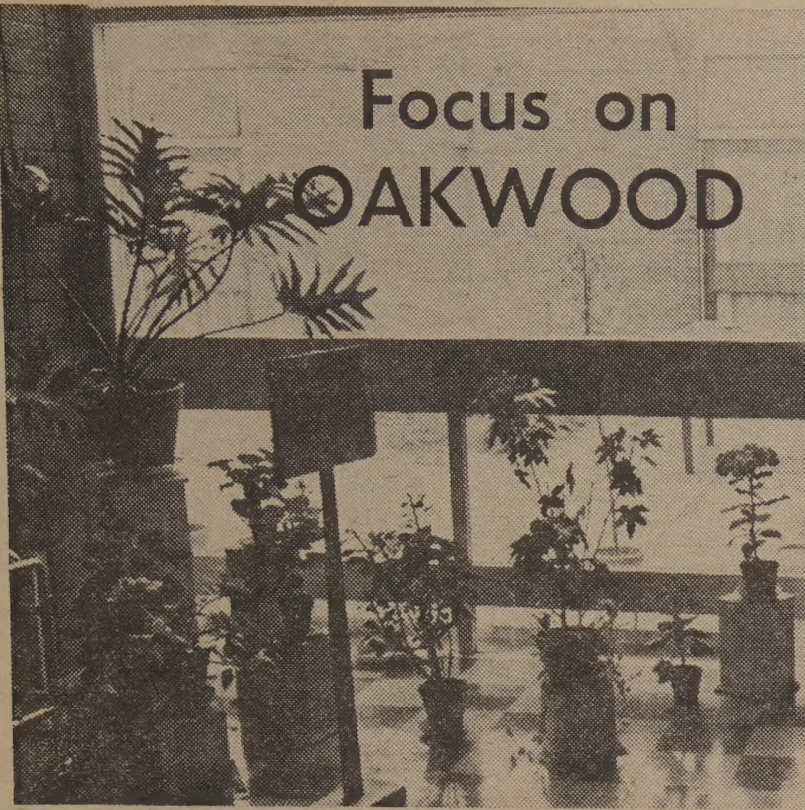
There are now 148 local Groups of the Association and the number is rising steadily. Riding—a wonderful therapy both physical and mental—is given free, the 4,000 'Helpers' being all volunteers except for a nucleus staff. Expenses are heavy, hence this competition organised by two RDA members, Mrs. S. Shaw and Mrs. L. Noble. The latter said she knew of one small child who went round an Army Camp, collecting sponsorship from every soldier.



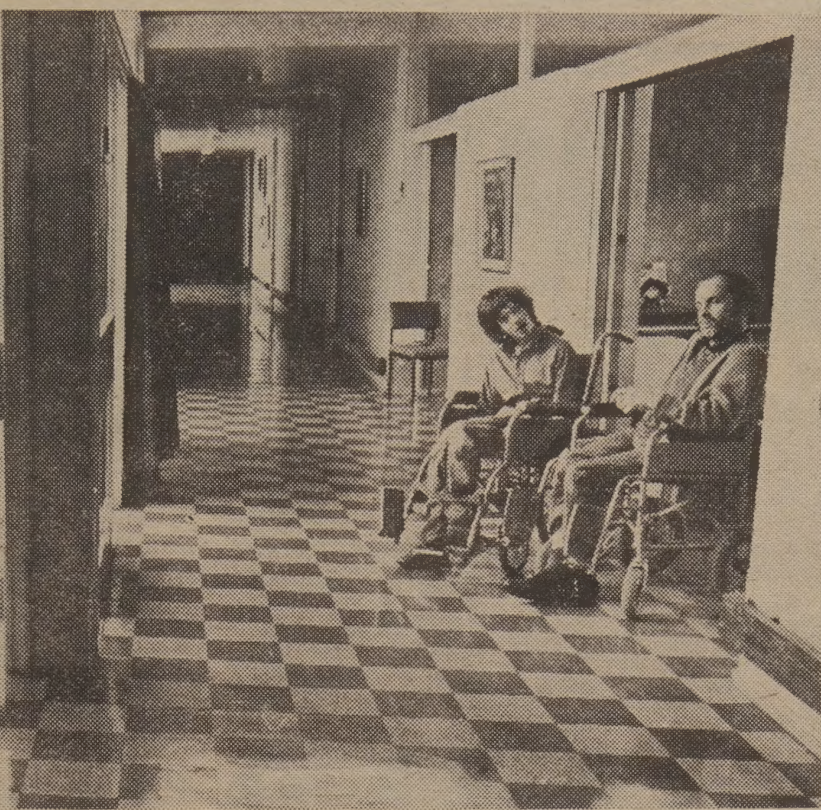
The Duchess of Norfolk, President of the Riding for the Disabled Association, presents a prize to one of the pupils from Birchwood School, Slough.

Actress Millicent Martin takes time off from the Chichester Festival Theatre to push over a beacon at the Wickham Arms. The coins amounted to £58 for the West Sussex Spastics Group. With Miss Martin the picture are licensees Mr. and Mrs. R. Schollar.





Focus on OAKWOOD



Picture above shows students on their way to a tutorial in the spacious surroundings of the centre. Right: Yvonne Hall is married to fellow Oakwood student John Hall, and here she gets down to a few wifely chores.



Proud students who want to "drop in" instead of opt out

LIKE so many of The Spastics Society's projects, Oakwood Further Education Centre in Kelvedon, Essex, was an imaginative and daring experiment when it first opened its doors eight years ago.

Oakwood offers highly intelligent, though severely handicapped students the special facilities they need to enable them to continue their studies after school-leaving age. An opportunity to prove that mind can triumph over twisted body, in fact.

Today Oakwood has proved its point, with a remarkable record of academic achievement behind it. An outstanding example is John Williams, who was at Oakwood and went on to Reading University. Though unable to speak, walk or use his arms and legs John gained an Upper Second Bachelor of Arts Degree in Politics this July. Other Oakwood students who gained degrees are June Melzer and John Wilkinson.

The Centre is the only educational establishment of its kind in the world, and is frequently visited by experts from other countries who want to see how it is done.



Student Roger Grout in conversation with a very intelligent Siamese cat called Cindy, a great favourite with all the residents.

It must be unique in another respect, because the students at Oakwood are not militantly against the Establishment. Rather than against it, in fact, they are manfully struggling to become part of it—to be accepted just as the able-bodied are, and allowed to make their contribution to the community.

This is not to say that they don't exercise the prerogative of students everywhere—to be highly critical of the world around them. However, they are far from anxious to drop-out. They want to be allowed in.

Some of the students have longish hair, but it is clean and combed. They are trendy in their clothes, but not outlandish. Their manners are good, too, and their attitudes seem to be a great deal more mature than many able-bodied students at Universities today.

Pressures

As Edward Doherty, Oakwood's Principal, who is himself slightly handicapped as a result of poliomyelitis, pointed out: "Our students can't afford not to conform. They feel they must if they want to be given a chance to prove themselves, to be accepted, and to find employment."

Mr. Doherty finds that by the time his students get to Oakwood they have faced up to most of their personal problems, and tend to cope very well with all the pressures of academic life.



Here's a student who is obviously enjoying his studies at this unique centre for further education.

What Oakwood offers to often heavily handicapped young people is an opportunity to pit their wits and intelligence against their problems. If they succeed it offers an alternative to life in an institution with the inevitable occupations of handicrafts and basketmaking.

Oakwood is purpose-built to accommodate 20 students. It is situated right in the middle of Kelvedon, a pretty Essex village mid-way between Colchester and Chelmsford. A little cut off, perhaps, but problems at Oakwood are usually overcome. Distance doesn't stop students from getting about any more than their handicaps do. They get up to London, to the Festival Hall for concerts, to the theatre, to the Tutankhamun exhibition, to local places for jazz concerts, films and football matches.

The centre offers facilities for 'O' and 'A' level examinations,

external degrees and Open University courses.

Teaching is carried out by a team of highly qualified part-time teachers from local schools and colleges. Each student's course is arranged to suit his or her individual needs and tastes. Study is conducted mainly on tutorial lines, with some individual tuition.

Some students, who feel they need the stimulus, attend part-time courses at Essex University and at local colleges.

The atmosphere at Oakwood is relaxed and easy, with the burden of responsibility for personal decisions left very much up to each student.

Excitement

"They are, after all, adults and must be left to make their own decisions and run their own lives as far as their disabilities will allow" Mr. Doherty points out. However, his door is always open and students frequently appear at the entrance asking for a bit of advice.

Most of the study/bedrooms are single and privacy is much prized.

When I visited the Centre, a large notice in the corridor warned: "Quiet, please. Examinations in progress". At lunch

time, the students appeared—most of them in wheelchairs.

Many of them cannot speak, and some of them have very little movement. Yet, despite this, there was the same suppressed air of excitement as they communicated with each other about the papers they had just sat—the same expressions of despair about how they had fared, the same 'tearing of hair' that takes place at any educational establishment after exams.

Ian Kettle, a 20-year-old student with difficult speech, was deputed to show me the library. As I wheeled him round, he quickly established a form of communication with me—showing not the least sign of inhibition, and soon put me at ease.

Ian had just been doing 'A' level exams in economics and history. He hopes to go on to Nottingham University and has been offered a place there, conditional on passing his 'A's. He had already been up to Nottingham to see how he would get on and was quietly confident that he was going to be able to cope. Ian, unlike many able-bodied students, has his future mapped out. He wants to be an accountant and intends to set up on his own.

I met Roger Grout also, who



John Hall can't use his hands, but this doesn't prevent him writing a first class essay in his quest for academic achievement.

is doing an H.N.C. course in economics and business organisation. He introduced me to Cindy, a very exotic Siamese kitten who lives in his study and affords him endless amusement.

A small group of students have been trained by the Ford Motor Company as computer programmers. Among these is Dick Boydell, who has just been made a member of the British Computer Society.

Gareth Cole is the Oakwood artist. The notice on his door reads: "Sinners only enter here!"

How to channel their undoubted talents into gainful employment despite their handicaps and all the problems that must be overcome, is, of course, the great pre-occupation and anxiety among Oakwood students.

Future plans

Only a small number have been able to go into employment as yet—but Oakwood is only eight years old. Plans are going ahead for the establishment of an Intellectual Workshop which may expand and exploit possible opportunities more fully.

If the sheer courage, initiative and academic success that have already been displayed by residents at Oakwood are anything to go by, there must surely be a future place and a job for these students who are so anxious for a chance to 'drop-in' to society.

Kay Christiansen

Administrator (male or female) required by BRIGHTON, HOVE AND DISTRICT SPASTICS SOCIETY for Hamilton House Day Centre at 69 Wilbury Avenue, Hove. 29 children and adults. Administrative and organising experience desirable. 5 day week. Qualified nursing staff responsible for care of patients. Salary based on Whitley Council scale. Applications stating age, details of experience, etc. and names of two persons to who reference may be made to Mr. G. S. Payne, Hon. Secretary, 69 Wilbury Avenue, Hove.



Pictures along the top of the page show the varied activities enjoyed at the Woodlarks Camp. First, the essential of any camp—spud bashing—and even this was enjoyed by the disabled holidaymakers and their helpers. Boating on Trencham Ponds was a favourite sport, and camp-fire cooking a sought-after "chore". The last picture shows the specially-adapted bus which took the campers on a full programme of outings.



Spastics find adventure on outdoor holiday

MANY holidaymakers would not get too excited about having to cook their own breakfast or wash up charred and grimy saucepans, but then not too many people have been on an exciting and adventurous holiday, organised by The Spastic's Society's Senior Clubs Officer Bill Hargreaves and his team. Their enthusiasm is infectious.

Bill and Holidays Officer Wendy Greenwood plus

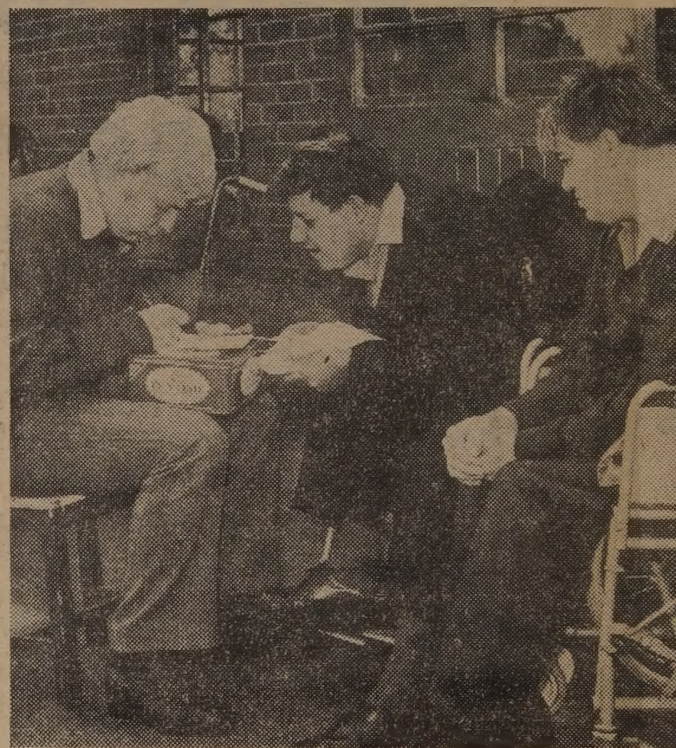
party responsible for certain jobs around the camp site each day. This would include washing-up, spud bashing, and cleaning the site but the most cherished 'chore' of all came in the early morning when each group prepared its own breakfast on open fires in the woods around the camp.

Popular

The Woodlarks camp has now become one of the most popular annual holidays to be organised by the team who are based at the Society's Social Work and Employment Department, Fitzroy Square, London.

The "housework" aspect constitutes only a very small part of the holiday, but it is often this that is most enjoyed by Spastics who have few opportunities for independence and helping themselves.

The rest of the holiday is spent in a gay round of riding, boating and swimming in the camp's luxurious pool. The camp is run by the Woodlarks Camp Site Trust especially for the disabled,



Above: Police cadet Ron Barber of Oxford helped Taylor and Peter Hunt, both of Bristol, to write home.

and there is also a sheltered workshop in the grounds.

All the campers slept under canvas, and Yvonne Roe of Derby even had pictures of The Slade pop group and David Cassidy, pinned to the canvas wall of her tent.

David Sears of Paddington was on his second Woodlarks Camp. "It's a great opportunity to get out into the open air and you meet many people from the rest of the country who you only see once again at Woodlarks."

Among the special events arranged by Bill and his team there was a disco-

theque, a beetle drive, fires, a barn dance, cue, and visits to a pub.

There was also a 'war game' in which in wheelchairs had the camp against a raid by the camp could walk and. This game was played with such seriousness that 'raiders' blackened faces with shoe polish and camouflage in the m-

Good com

Holidays such as a good opportunity for the Spastics Society to "police" in the form of cadets who rally part of their community training. After lifting and carrying chairs and generally a hand, they are in company and appreciate the chance of acquaintances with the physically handicapped people.

One of the cadets was Ann Carter of South London who said: "One of the main reasons about integrating the disabled is that physically able-bodied get a chance to meet them on a personal basis."

"This holiday has been a unique opportunity to make some interesting new friends with the handicapped. It's not having ordinary people instead of trained staff with them all the time."



Above: No shortage of helping hands when the campers went horse riding at a local stable. Below: The camp provides a chance to meet old friends, and John Losano of Surrey, talks to David Sears of Paddington outside their tent.



Willing helpers gave personal care to the spastic campers, and here's a "close shave" in progress.

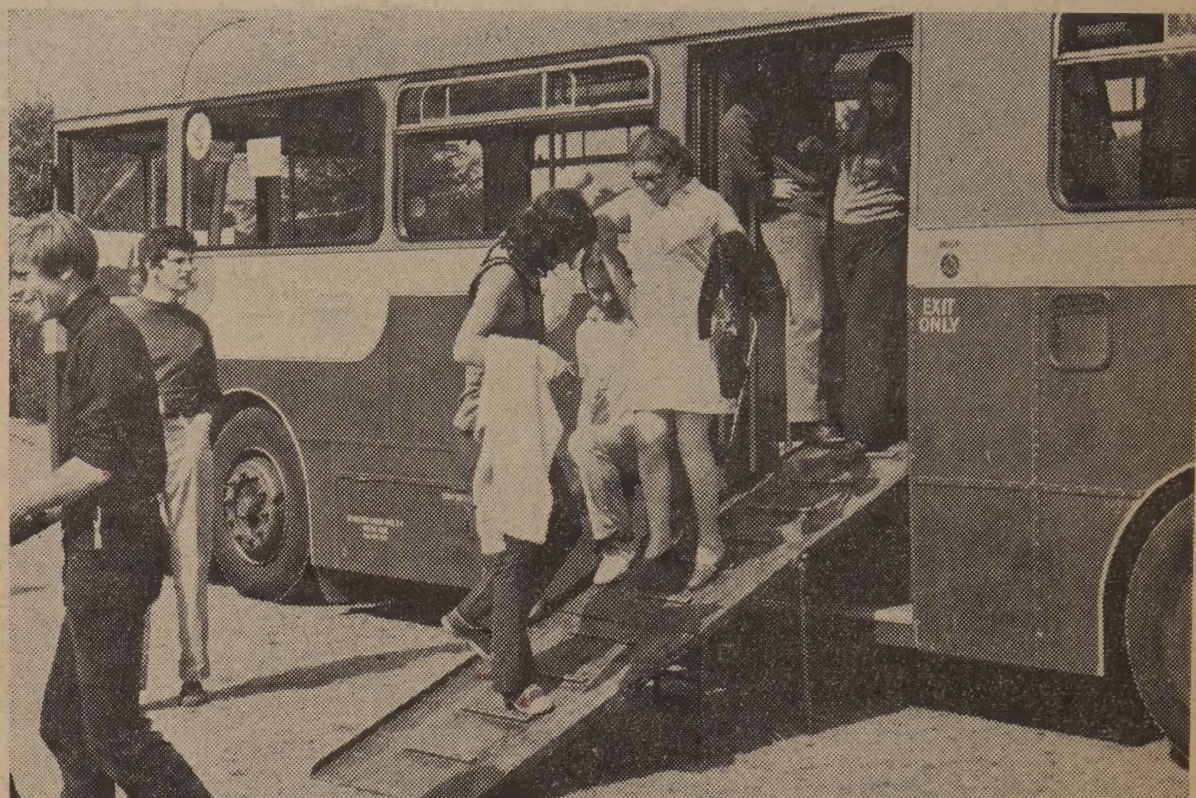
their helpers Marianne West, Roger Holt and Mrs. Mary Hargreaves have been responsible for organising countless camps and holidays for spastics, the latest of which was at Woodlarks Camp, Farnham, Surrey.

Here 52 disabled campers and 25 helpers spent a week on the beautifully equipped site savouring the joys of the open air life, and joining wholeheartedly into all the activities.

The campers were divided into five groups with each



Campers and helpers line up for lunch with appetites sharpened by the outdoor life.



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Many wheelchair bound spastics find a freedom in the water that is denied them on dry land, and the good weather allowed them to make full use of the swimming pool at the camp.

£4,000-PLUS FROM GROUPS FOR FAMILY SERVICES CENTRE

LOCAL groups of volunteers working for spastics have responded generously to the appeal from the Society's Director, Mr. James Loring, for donations towards the running costs of the vital Family Services and Assessment Centre at Fitzroy Square, London.

This year, groups have donated over £4,000, a higher total than in any previous years. Miss Margaret Morgan, Head of Social Work and Employment, told Spastics News: "We are sincerely grateful to the groups for this very tangible support. Many groups have contributed regularly since the centre was opened in 1968, and this year many of the regular donations have considerably increased."

Among the donations were: Manchester and District Spastics Society, £250; Oldham and District £200; Clacton and District £150; and donations of

£100 each from groups at Folkestone, Jersey, Southampton, South West London, West Bromwich, Wycombe, Hemel Hempstead, North London, plus the Northern Ireland Council for Orthopaedic Development Inc.

SHE SEWS HER CONTRIBUTION

FOR the past three years, elderly Mrs. Rose Sparks of Kilmington, Nr. Axminster, has been sending beautiful hand smocked dresses to the Society's Meldreth Manor School, Royston, Herts. Mrs. Sparks makes the dresses for little girls at Meldreth as her contribution to helping spastics.

The dream comes true in a home of their own

Cont. from page 1

possible. Brian's basic disabilities were very severe; he could not use a manual wheelchair and needed help with every aspect of personal and everyday life.

After the wedding they decided to forego a honeymoon, but had a riotous reception at their old home, The Spastics Society's Ponds Home in Seer Green, Bucks. Then they set off immediately for their new flat at Hamworthy, just outside Poole in Dorset.

Sitting in her new home, Margaret told me: "The journey down was exhausting, made worse by the fact that we were both a bit tipsy from the reception. There were reporters and photographers



Pauline demonstrates the push-button running water in her kitchen. It is adaptations like this that help her to run her home.

waiting at the flat, so by the time we were finally alone we were both exhausted."

The flat is part of Friendship House, a complex of self contained accommodation for the disabled in the centre of a new and expanding housing estate. It was built by the Inskip Housing Authority Ltd. at a cost of £165,000 and was opened last May.

It houses 34 residents, eight of whom are married couples. The whole complex is built on a single level, all of which is accessible to wheelchairs, and it is grouped round a central communal garden.

"Since we came down here,"

said Margaret, "there have been no end of things to do around the flat and, although things take us that much longer, we are like any other married couple setting up home."

"We have been out buying furniture and have bought a new desk for our typewriter, a sofa and an easy chair which we are rather proud of because it is worth £50 and we got it for £25. When we are out shopping a lot of people recognise us as the couple from the television programmes, but I don't think they sell us stuff cheaper because of that!"

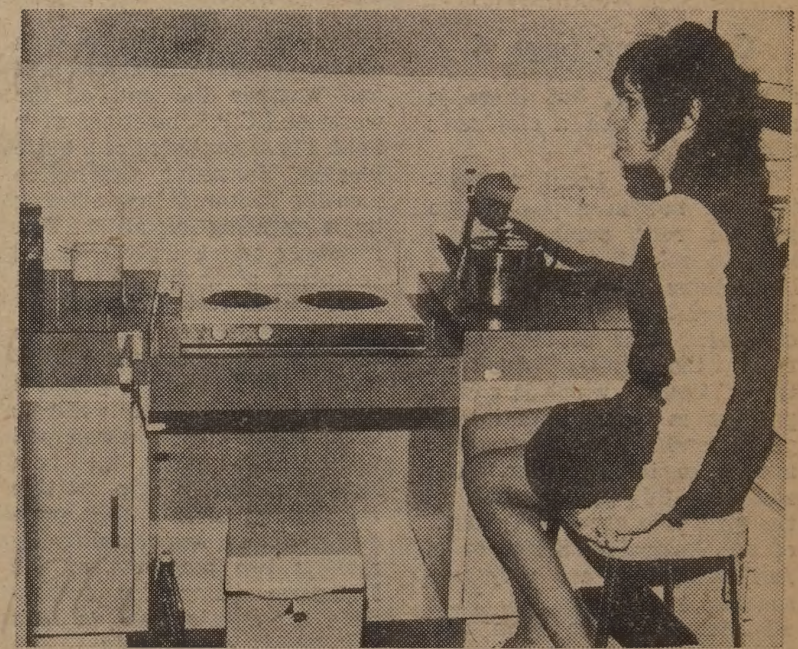
Their flat has many gadgets and adaptations to make life easier for Margaret and Brian. These include electrically operated push button water, taps, and a hoist which runs straight from the bedroom to the bath. All flats also have an intercom linked directly with the staff member always on duty.

Dropped

However, Margaret and Brian rarely need to call for help. Said Margaret: "There is always the feeling that you have failed if you call for help. The only times we have had to use the intercom are when we have dropped things like a cup or the ketchup bottle, which broke all over the kitchen floor."

After paying the rent of £6.60 a week, Margaret and Brian have approximately £9 on which to live. "It isn't hard to manage on that, but one of the problems is that we cannot always buy cheap food."

"At the moment, being disabled and not really having adapted ourselves to the secrets of cooking, we find that we have to buy a lot of convenience foods like frozen dinners or fish fingers. They present a few physical problems



Margaret in her kitchen, which like the rest of the flat in the special development for the disabled was designed to give maximum independence to a handicapped housewife.

in preparation, but these foods are always that bit more expensive.

One of the chief differences between life at Hamworthy and life at Ponds is people. At Ponds, life was a gregarious affair and there were always people around. Now Margaret and Brian are on their own far more, and this has its advantages and disadvantages. They say:

"Life is a lot quieter here, but even so there has been no end of people calling in. Many old friends from Ponds have been in to see us and there are often people staying for weekends. But we also have our privacy when we want it too."

One couple who have called down to Hamworthy and stayed longer than expected are Pauline and Nigel Morrow, old friends from Ponds who have been married for three years. They moved into a vacant flat just across the courtyard from

Margaret and Brian five weeks ago.

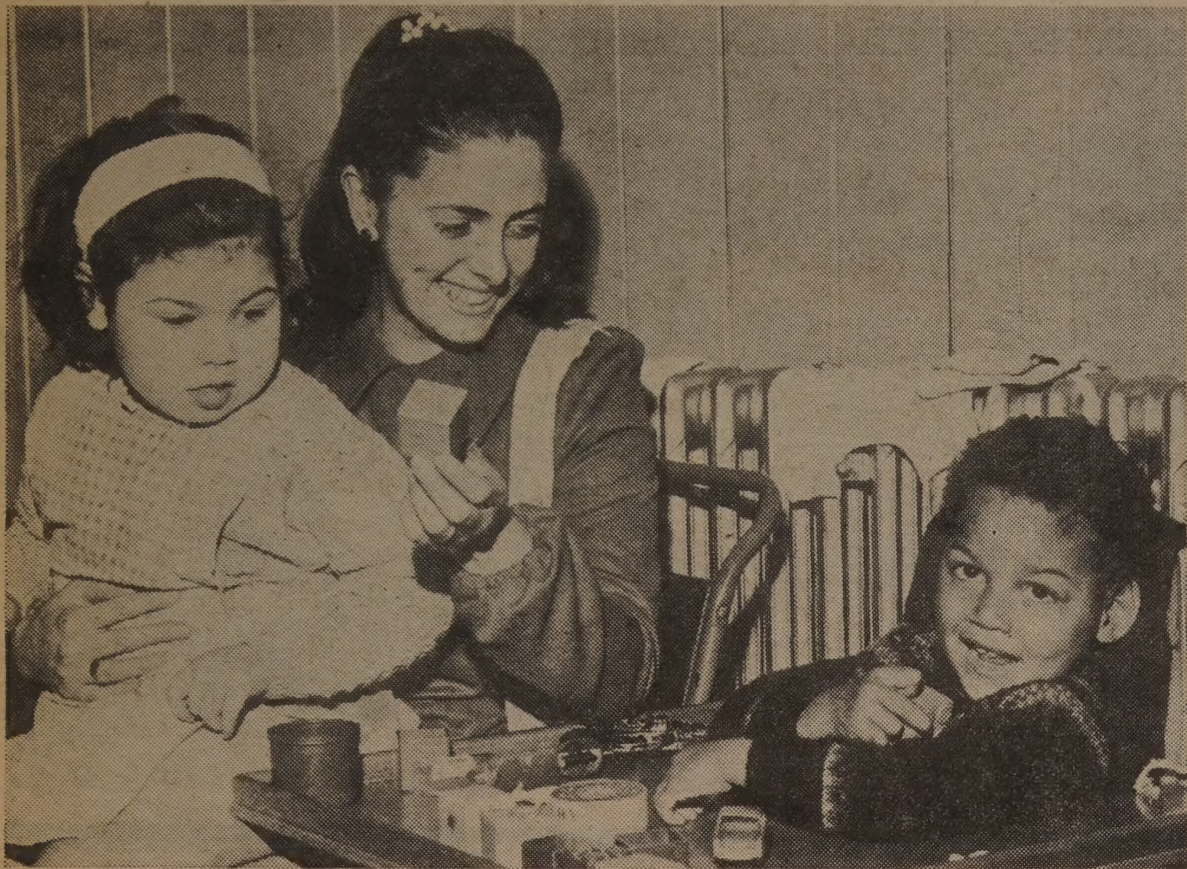
Pauline said: "We probably got the flat as a result of Margaret and Brian being here. They told us of the vacancy and recommended us. This is probably the only place of its kind in the country and it is hard to get a vacancy."

"We are still settling in, but appreciate that this flat is going to give us the freedom we always wanted. And the social life is good, too, with coach trips to many local resorts and beauty spots."

There are no pretensions about Friendship House. It does not pretend to be a major breakthrough or an entirely new angle on the care of the handicapped... and yet it is. It is just your own four walls and your own privacy, something that few other centres, however revolutionary, can provide.



Nigel and Pauline Morrow, and Margaret and Brian meet in the communal garden which provides the focal point of the Friendship Flats.



● A cuddle for Polly and a helping hand for Johnnie with his building bricks, from Mrs. Madeleine Paskin, the 24-years-old Chairman of Dudley Spastics Group. Both the children are regular attenders at the Dudley Spastics Centre.

Our international work

Cont. from page 4

able enterprise, but there is also a school and a children's centre.

In Australia Local Authorities are not in a position to provide very much financial help to voluntary bodies, and large sums of money have to be raised by the spastics associations. Much of this comes from the "Miss Australia Quest" Contest which is a competition in which both intelligence and personal presence are taken into account. The result of this is that most of the girls who become "Queens" of the Australian States or of Australia itself are very personable young people. They all seem to have been well trained to take part in public events, and on the first morning that I spent in Sydney I attended a City to Coast walking competition which attracted many thousands of sponsored spectators. The walk was from the centre of Sydney to Bondai Beach, and at Bondai Beach the New South Wales Minister of Sport and Miss New South Wales presented the prizes, she with as much dignity and aplomb as he. In England it would have seemed incongruous for a Cabinet Minister to share prize-giving with a beauty queen, but in Australia it happened quite naturally and Miss New South Wales acquitted herself extremely well.

How they help

Australia, apart from the Western Territory, consists of six more or less independent states each with its own Governor, Ministers and Parliament. This situation is to a great extent mirrored in the organisation of its movement for spastics. Each State has its own independent society and the Federal Society, The Australian Cerebral Palsy Association, whose Chairman is Mr. Jim Nelson, operates in areas of work which by mutual agreement of the State organisations are best done at Federal level. In this its structure differs substantially from the U.K. Spastics Society. The whole organisation is very successful and in relation to the size of the population (12,552,000) raises the very large sums of money which are necessary to provide local services. Although the position varies from State to State, on the whole Local Authorities contribute very little towards centres for the handicapped.

Most of the evenings of the

conference were taken up with official or semi-official business and towards the end of the week the I.C.P.S. meetings were held. These consisted of a quite lengthy Executive Committee meeting followed that evening by a meeting of all I.C.P.S. members and a truly splendid reception given by Mrs. Ethel Hausman of New York, Honorary Treasurer of I.C.P.S. One of I.C.P.S.'s problems is lack of income. It also has a problem which seems to be endemic with organisations concerned with cerebral palsy, that is a lack of volunteer help. At this meeting we decided upon some delegation of responsibility by making two members of the Executive Committee responsible for development in Asia and Africa respectively.

Sydney is an exceptionally beautiful city. The harbour is quite breathtaking. It consists of a number of bays: the bays are fairly heavily built upon but they do not seem to overwhelm the harbour which is large enough to keep them at arm's length. The famous bridge and the new opera

house which is to be opened shortly by Her Majesty the Queen are major spectacles.

Whilst there is some hostility to what are thought of as typical English ways, e.g. the "Oxford" accent (incidentally, how many really have an Oxford accent these days?); in practice the hostility means very little, particularly if you are a friendly sort of person, and throughout the whole of our stay my wife and I were shown great kindness and consideration, in the shops and the restaurants, in the hotels and in the streets, indeed everywhere.

I had gone to Australia after a delightful ten days' holiday in the Dordogne, a part of France for which I feel a great affection, and it was with some reluctance that I sacrificed the rest of what would have been a fairly quiet August and uprooted myself for the long air journey to Australia. I shall, however, never regret having done this and I am now left with an urge to go back and really get to know the country.

Sir Keith opens Phoenix centre where future hopes will rise

A new day centre designed to provide vital early treatment and facilities for 30 spastic children was officially opened by Sir Keith Joseph, Secretary of State for Social Services in Farnborough, Kent, on Tuesday, 26th September. The Phoenix Day Centre, which stands in the grounds of Farnborough Hospital, was built by The Spastics Society at a cost of over £50,000. It offers facilities for physiotherapy, speech therapy, education and nursery care for boys and girls between the ages of three and eight years.

The unit comprises three classrooms, a dining, assembly and play area, a physiotherapy room, a speech therapy room, and an occupational therapy room. In addition there is a consulting room, staff offices, a kitchen, a laundry, a toilet area, and a series of store-rooms.

New facilities

The plans for the new building were formulated in 1971 when the old unit, inadequately housed in a hutted part of Farnborough Hospital, was faced with closure. After discussions between the Bromley Hospital Management Commit-

tee and The Spastics Society, plans were agreed for the erection of a new and well-equipped centre offering up-to-date facilities.

The Spastics Society undertook to build it and provide the capital expenditure, after which it would be handed over to the Hospital Management Committee which would be responsible for running and maintaining it.

A fund-raising campaign was immediately set up under the chairmanship of a businessman, Mr. Edward Drewery, with a target figure of £50,000. Since this sum was set, however, costs have accelerated considerably.

Chairman is a girl of action

THEY needed a carpet at Dudley Spastics Centre. For the kitchen. It didn't have to be new, and the size wasn't really important. But some sort of floor covering was an absolute necessity.

"Some of the children can't walk," explained the Chairman.

"They get around on their hands and knees, or their bottoms, or their tummies. Often they move about without shoes and socks.

"And you can't have them crawling around on bare boards."

These comments opening an article in the Dudley Herald about the centre resulted in enough gifts of carpets to enable them to cover the three main rooms.

The Centre also needs a sink unit with a drainer—again for the kitchen.

But, with a deficit of something like £1,000 to be wiped off, the staff has to continue using the old, antiquated sink for washing up the mugs from the children's drinks, and the plates from their mid-day lunch.

Hazard

And recently there has been an even bigger hazard facing the children and their attendants when they arrived each morning.

Vandals have started hurling stones from the bank behind the centre in Highfield Road through the windows in the various "classrooms."

"We come in a morning to find the floors showered in broken glass," says the Chairman.

"You can imagine what would happen if the children started crawling about in THAT."

The whole situation makes the Chairman angry and shocked. Angry that

anyone, vandals included, could put handicapped children in a situation where they can be hurt even further; and shocked at the apathy towards spastics in general, and the centre in particular.

And, at 24, Mrs. Madeleine Paskin's anger is impressive—and vocal.

"I want people to realise that the centre is for local spastics," she emphasises.

"After all, you never know where spasticity is going to occur.

"I might have a spastic child . . . you might have one.

"Every time I look at one of these children, I think, there but for the grace of God . . ."

In fact, Mrs. Paskin, who lives in Vicarage Road West, Woodsetton, does have a five-year-old son, John, who has a deformed foot, for which he is receiving hospital treatment.

His three-year-old sister Helen is "perfectly all right." But it wasn't her own little boy's problem that led Mrs. Paskin to take an interest in the group.

"I heard about it through a

friend in the St. John Ambulance Brigade," she explains.

"She was also an attendant at the centre and suggested I might like to look round.

"When I saw the children my heart went out to them. I felt I had to do something to help."

The "help" resulted in Mrs. Paskin being elected on to the committee.

Now, 18 months later, she has become Chairman, the first woman to hold the position since the group was formed in 1956.

Lively — she is half Belgian and has the Continental woman's expressive features — and enthusiastic, she is determined that Dudley should be made aware of the needs of the centre.

She feels that local spastics, in spite of a Spastics Week, flag days, social evenings, jumble sales, and the constant support of one or two loyal organisations, are becoming a bit of a Cinderella among the charities.

Language

Degree of handicap varies. Many have difficulty in walking, particularly unaided. The majority find communication difficult, although an odd sort of language has evolved among the older children.

One or two are quite helpless.

The staff love them all.

"If they weren't dedicated," says the Chairman emphatically, "they wouldn't stay with us because they can all earn far more in ordinary jobs."

But this is the criteria that keeps the group functioning — an intense feeling that handicapped children need all the help they can get.

Story and picture by courtesy of Midland United Newspapers Ltd., Dudley, Worcs.



A happy wedding day picture shows Fred Hore and his spastic bride Gillian Heath outside Portsmouth Register Office. They arrived in style aboard a horse-drawn trolley, lent by a general dealer.

Gillian, whose home is in Coventry, has been at Portsmouth spastics work centre for some years and it was here that she met Fred who drives a mini-bus for the Portsmouth and District Spastics Society.

The couple were greeted at the Register Office

by the landlord and regulars of the Charles Dickens, their favourite pub, dressed in Dickensian costume for the occasion.

Picture by courtesy of Portsmouth News and Coventry Evening Telegraph.

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Splashes from the Spastics Pool

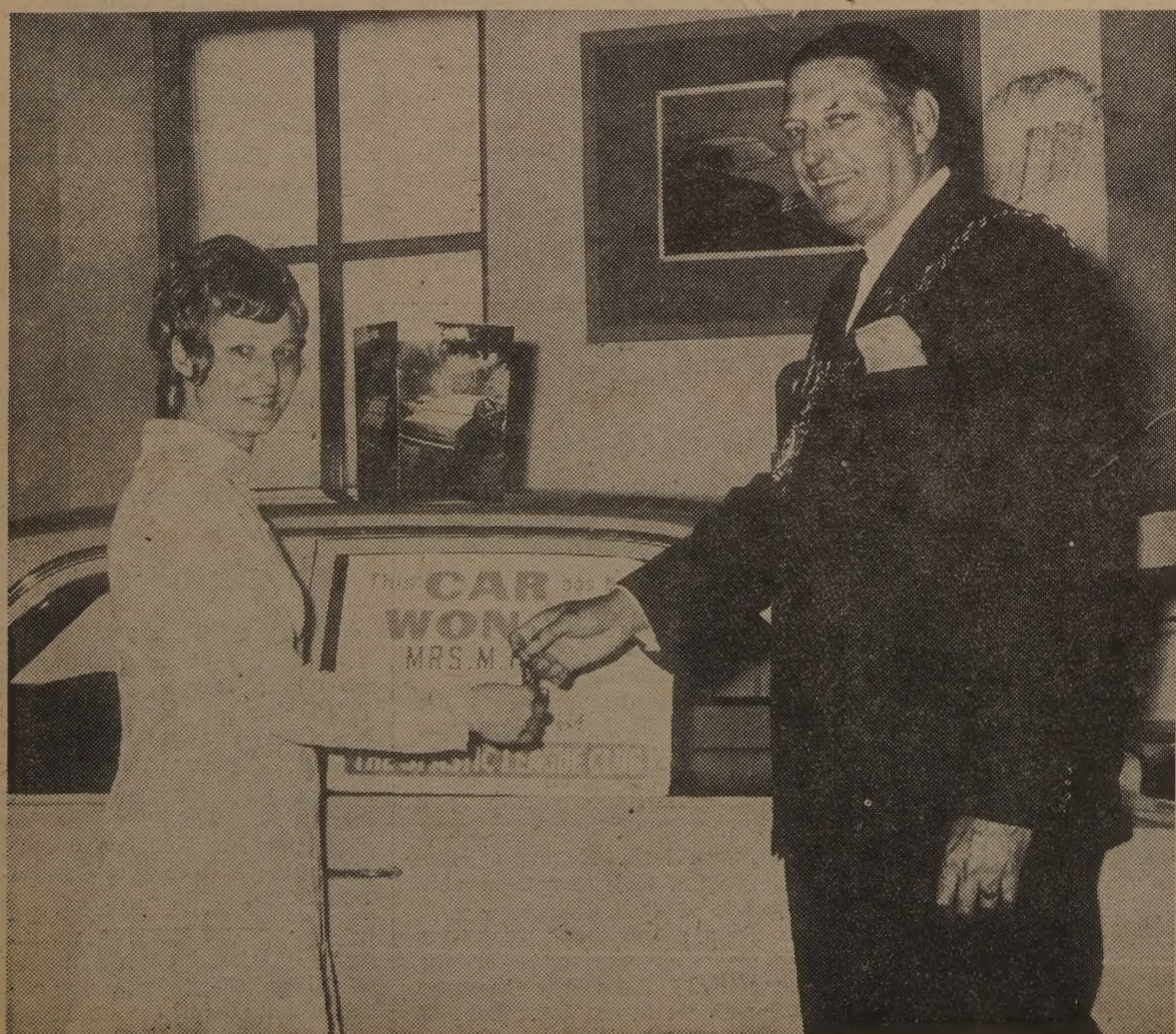


From one end of the country to the other members are winning big prizes in the weekly Spastics Competitions. This month we feature Cornwall and Scotland.

Above: Smiles all round as Alex Willoughby of The Dons hands over a cheque for £1,060.85 to Mr. W. Bremner of Aberdeen.

Above right: And now to the far North, and a double presentation by the Alexander Brothers to Mrs. H. Hamilton and Mrs. L. Kerr both of Falkirk.

Below: Mrs. M. Hill of Liskeard being congratulated by the Mayor of Liskeard on her success in Charm Girl Competition number 5.



Bristol team goes "on tour" to meet helpers

THIS autumn will see the start of another series of get-togethers which is a continuation of the trend set last year by a team from Westmorland House. Led by Director, Don Long, the party of Top Ten staff will set out from Bristol on October 2nd to meet Derby collectors that evening and Nottingham collectors on the 3rd. Other confirmed dates are Cambridge on October 16th and London on October 23rd. These informal meetings have proved invaluable for the exchange of ideas and increasing of mutual understanding.

It is anticipated that var-

ious other towns and cities will be visited before next spring in an endeavour to meet as many supervisors and collectors as possible.

"A great deal of importance is attached to this form of communication," commented Don Long. "Over the past 18 months we have learned a great deal about our collectors and supervisors at first hand, and I'm convinced that they welcome this opportunity of open discussion as much as we do."

"After all, a united effort is essential to operate efficiently a weekly competition which raises so much money for charity."



Thousands of extra prizes on the way in new programme

A FABULOUS Motor Show competition for members is an exciting start to the autumn programme aimed at attracting new members to the Spastics Competitions. The first prize of a Vauxhall Victor De luxe, five second prizes of Vauxhall Firenzas and 10 third prizes of Vauxhall Vivas provide the main attractions of the new competition.

But the prizes don't end there, 400 spring holidays in Majorca and 2,000 consolations of

£5 can also be added to the list.

With the 16 cars as principal prizes it will come as no surprise that the competition is based on the Motor Show which is being held in London from 18th to 28th October. It is so simple to enter; all members and prospective members have to do is submit their estimated attendance for the whole period.

And, further competitions are already planned. A Christmas competition with £50,000-worth of prizes including cash, wine packs and Christmas hampers will mean that there will be thousands of additional winners.

Below: Former Cornwall and England rugby full back, Roger Hosen, presenting a Vauxhall Viva to Mrs. J. Symonds of Stithians near Truro.



... news in brief ... news in brief ...

THE Wild West came to Coombe Farm, the Society's Adult Residential Centre in Croydon, recently, when rival groups of cowboys rode into town and started shootin'.

It was all part of an entertainment given by the Virginian Western Club at the centre's annual fete.

The fete made a profit of £900, which will help towards Coombe Farm's annual running costs and the purchase of a new ambulance.

A DARTS competition among teams from 16 pubs in

Eastbourne, Bexhill and Hastings has raised £136 for Colwall Court, the children's holiday home in Sussex, run by the Stars Organisation for Spastics.

DURING the newspaper strike way back in the summer, enterprising staff at the Stationery Centre at the Post Office in Farnham Road, Slough, Bucks. produced their own news sheet. They sold it in aid of spastics and raised over £8. This sum was added to the money in the spastics' collecting box at the post office which normally produces a

quarterly income of between £3 and £4.

THIS year's Carnival at Walton in Essex is expected to have made a profit of about £600.

The Carnival association's main project this summer was to provide a beach hut by the sea for spastics.

CELIA West, a 24-year-old resident of The Spastics Society's Coombe Farm Centre, Croydon, Surrey, attended the Olympic Games with a party of handicapped Ranger Guides.

'We're a perfect family — and we'll manage all on our own'

JEAN and Bill Thompson are the proud parents of a beautiful baby girl. They're competent and perfectly happy — but people just can't believe that the courageous couple are capable of looking after their own child.

For Jean and Bill, of St. Helens, Lancs., are physically handicapped. Bill (30) is a spastic. His speech and movements are affected. Jean (25) was a child victim of polio, and since then has had to walk with the aid of calipers and sticks.

When Jean and Bill revealed their marriage plans last year, they had to battle through a battery of condemning frowns and glances from friends and relations.

But the real trial began when Jean found she was pregnant.

"I could tell that people thought my baby was going to be born all shapes and sizes", said Jean, "but I didn't have any doubts, because neither of our handicaps are hereditary.

"It must have given everybody a big surprise when Linsey was born perfectly formed."

Proud

Linsey is a baby any mother would be proud to bear. Dark skinned with large brown eyes, she's proving to be strong and healthy.

"I had secretly feared that Linsey might be born a bit slow—but not deformed," admitted Bill, "But as you can see, she's sitting up already. When she's lying in her pram we have to watch her every second, because she's always pulling herself upright.

"I think people begin to worry when I pick her up. I'm very shaky. So much so, in fact, that my writing is almost illegible. "But when I take Linsey in my arms she seems to feel more safe and secure there than with any other person."

One example of the shocked reaction Jean and Bill encountered was when they took Linsey to see the matron of a Blackpool boarding school where Bill had been a pupil.

Astonished

Said Bill, "Matron was astonished, she just couldn't understand how we could possibly cope with a baby. That's the kind of situation we meet everywhere."

After Linsey's birth, the local welfare department offered to fix Jean up with a home help.

"I didn't want any kind of assistance with the baby," said Jean. "She's my child and I'm quite capable of looking after her. When I was leaving hospital they insisted that a normal person should come to help me a home.

shortly, we'll have to take turns attending the club, because we're trying to keep Linsey on a routine—sending her to bed at the same time each night."

Bill is trying to establish a P.H.A.B. club in his St. Helens hometown.

"Some people think that we're a race apart, with no minds or feelings. Parents of handicapped children sometimes try to keep their kids apart, or with children who are also afflicted," said Bill.

"We would never go to a place confined to the handicapped, because we believe in integration of all people."

No problems

So far, Jean and Bill have had no great difficulties with their baby.

At meal times, Jean prepares the baby food and settles down on the settee to feed Linsey. Nappies are changed with ease, and when Linsey is popped into bed at night she usually sleeps right through until Bill gets up for work next morning.

Only problems Bill foresees will occur in a few months' time—the toddling stage.

He said: "Neither Jean nor myself can run fast. So when she starts trotting about we won't be able to catch her.

"The only thing we can do is stress to Linsey, from the start, that she has got to stay close to us.

"Other couples instruct their children that they mustn't run into the road. We must somehow make Linsey understand why she mustn't dash off out of reach."

"Not Bill—but a 'normal' person!

"It was so silly. After all, we were going to care for Linsey for the rest of her life.

"People have been really astonished to see that we can cope, just like any other parents."

And that's exactly how Jean and Bill look upon each other—as just another ordinary couple.

Bill works as a council gardener and is umpire for a local cricket club.

He's also a committee member at their regular club P.H.A.B.—the Physically Handicapped and Able Bodied Club, at Huyton.

Jean and Bill met at the club two years ago.

And Linsey looks as if, when she's older, she'll go on the club register.

"We've been taking our baby to club meetings each week.

"Folk there think the world of her. Trouble is that,

New idea is simple as ABC

This novel teaching aid has been designed by Bryant Hodgkinson of Glasgow. It will help teach the alphabet to spastic children with poor hand control and enable them to form words and sentences without the use of pencil and paper.

It consists of four lengths of PVC gutter stuck to a hardboard base over which are placed individual "letters" cut from a length of downpipe and marked with ink transfers.

The letters are held ready for use in an easily-constructed wooden frame from

which they can be extracted by clumsy fingers.

Once in the required position on the wordboard the letters are held firm by the spring in the PVC tubing.

Mr. Hodgkinson made four complete sets of the teaching aid, each with 140 letters, from materials retailing at £5. He hopes the idea will be taken up by a manufacturer.

Picture shows the aid in use at a special school for spastics.



Bill and Jean with their baby daughter Linsey. "We're a perfect family," they say. Picture and article by courtesy of the St. Helens Reporter.

Transport poses a bit of a headache, because although Jean and Bill have invalid carriages they are not allowed to carry passengers.

"We have applied for a specially adapted mini car," said Bill, "so we will be able to take Linsey out a lot more,

and so we'll all be together. We hope to get the car around Christmas time."

Linsey has completed the happiness of the Thompsons. And they have proved that handicapped couples can make a success of marriage.

Said Jean: "There's no reason why we people shouldn't get married. The handicapped have their lives to lead — and they won't have their parents to lean on for ever.

"We are extremely happy, and we'll probably have more children if everything works out OK with Linsey.

"We're very proud parents. I know Linsey will grow up and accept us, like all other children love their parents.

"We're a perfect family—no different from any other. And the sooner people realise that, the better!"

Barbara Benbow

Help for new Swansea plan

A RECENT fete held by Swansea and District Spastic Association raised £687—a record total for this annual event.

Entertainments included a puppet theatre, fortune tellers and a variety of side-shows.

The fete was opened by the Mayor of Swansea, Councillor Chris Thomas, who congratulated the group on its latest project — the provision of a residential unit costing £20,000. This, said the Mayor, was deserving of the greatest possible public support.

During the same week this group also received a cheque for £200 from the Swansea Spastic and L.V.A. Darts League.

Word wise?

A new word has been born. We came across it recently amongst the many press cuttings which arrive weekly in the editorial office of Spastics News.

The relevant item, cut from a provincial newspaper, described a fund-raising event held by a local Spastics Group. The story referred to two of the handicapped group members as "...spasticated Joe Soap and Fred Bloggs..."

Was "Spasticated" a printer's error, we wonder, or an attempt on the part of an eager young reporter to coin a new adjective?

S.O.S. members at midnight show

A MIDNIGHT matinee held at the Festival Theatre, Paignton, Devon, has raised £1,600 for the Stars Organisation for Spastics and local Round Table charities.

Among the stars of the show were S.O.S. Chairman, Dickie Henderson, and Jack Howarth, alias Albert Tatlock of Coronation Street.

A market organised by Worthing, Littlehampton and District Spastics Society raised £530 for Group funds.

Feet-dragging authorities should get a move on, says crusading MP

"No Feet to Drag," by Alfred Morris, M.P., and Arthur Butler. (Sidgwick and Jackson — £2.50).

THIS book is virtually the story of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons' Act, 1970, from Alfred Morris's first awareness of being part of a "disabled family" in the pre-war slums of Manchester to his assessment of the Bill's short-term effects.

The title was suggested by a conversation in which Morris took part some months after the Act became law. A disabled woman asked how effectively it was being implemented in various parts of the country. Morris replied that many local authorities were beginning to follow up his recommendations, but some were still dragging their feet.

"Meanwhile, many disabled people are suffering who have no feet to drag," commented the woman.

The book is immensely readable, written in a brisk journalistic style, far removed from the tedious verbosity of Government reports. It starts with Alfred Morris's own account of his poverty-stricken childhood as the son of a war-disabled serviceman.

Deprived

"The quickest way to find a deprived child is to find a disabled father," he points out.

The story continues with a brief outline of Government provision for the disabled up to 1970, and the preliminary work on the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Bill.

The central chapters build up a vivid picture of the kind of people the Bill was designed to help. Under such headings as "A Family Affair," "The Child," "Earning a Living," "A Home to Live In" and "Getting Around," Arthur Butler quotes dozens of real-life case histories. From these, the reader is made sharply aware of how great a need there was for Government legislation on behalf of Britain's disabled.

Among the case histories which concern spastics are:

"MRS. T., a deserted wife with four children. The third, aged 14, is a spastic girl; the fourth, 12, is an autistic boy. Mrs. T. has had problems in finding suitable education for her children. The boy had even been excluded from a local authority special school because of his difficult behaviour."

"Mrs. T. has no financial support in coping with these seriously handicapped children. She is unable to leave either alone for more than a few minutes, but her application for an attendance allowance was turned down. She has been unable to make many friends because of the demands of her family. She has had no holiday for six years."

"PETER is seven, a severely handicapped spastic, mentally and physically. He is totally dependent on others and needs washing, dressing and

feeding. He gets around by rolling on the floor. He is blind, has no speech, and is subject to fits. The whole house revolves around him. He attends a special school daily. His father is a chemist, and his mother has suffered from a severe heart condition since his birth. He had an older sister, Mary, who died of cancer after a long illness, and his older brother, John, is ten. At times John has to mind, lift and generally assist his mother with Peter.

"Although John is an intelligent boy, he is a year behind with school work, and his mother feels that he needs more of her time — time she is physically unable to give him. Peter occasionally spends two weeks in a small Family Help Unit, and when he is away John is a different boy. The family have been offered a permanent hospital place for Peter, but despite the effect his continued presence at home is having on his mother's health and his brother's progress, Peter's family feels unable to accept the offer."

"A YOUNG man in his mid-twenties, holding O-Levels in mathematics and book-keeping, complains that because he is a spastic he has to find employment in a spastics workshop cutting firewood and doing similar odd jobs."

"MR. A. has cerebral palsy and because of his disability he earns much less than his ability justifies. He has a total income of £20 a week. Mrs. A. was originally in normal health, but now has a chronic psychiatric illness following a nervous breakdown after the birth of her youngest child. She cannot leave her home and needs regular drug therapy. There are three children, all above average intelligence, but the two younger children have been seriously affected by the family problems. Mrs. A. does not get exemption from prescription charges, and they get no help towards a family car because psychiatric illness is not officially classified as a disability by the Government."

"Local social service work is not very good, but even if it were it would probably not be able to relieve the family of

its continual strain and worry. They have tried to be independent. They have tried to save. They have had no holiday in 25 years."

ANOTHER example of sheer bureaucratic bad manners is the case of Mrs. B., who asked her local authority to provide a ramp over some awkward steps so that she could wheel her 2-year-old spastic into the garden. "The Health Visitor told her: 'Don't waste the town's money—put the child away.' This child was a much-loved member of a united family. Her eldest brother had won a prize for being the most helpful and considerate child in the school. The mother commented: 'Perhaps our spastic child has taught her brothers and sisters a little consideration for others.'"

Machines

In the chapter on "The Life Machines," we are told:

"A POSSUM machine can cost between £300 and £600. But the saving to the taxpayer far outweighs that expense. This is because it costs over £100 a week to keep a patient in an intensive care unit."

Elsewhere the writer makes the point that with a little help towards transport and possibly minor alterations to unsuitable work premises, many disabled people now nominally dependent on Social Security could find employment and themselves become taxpayers.

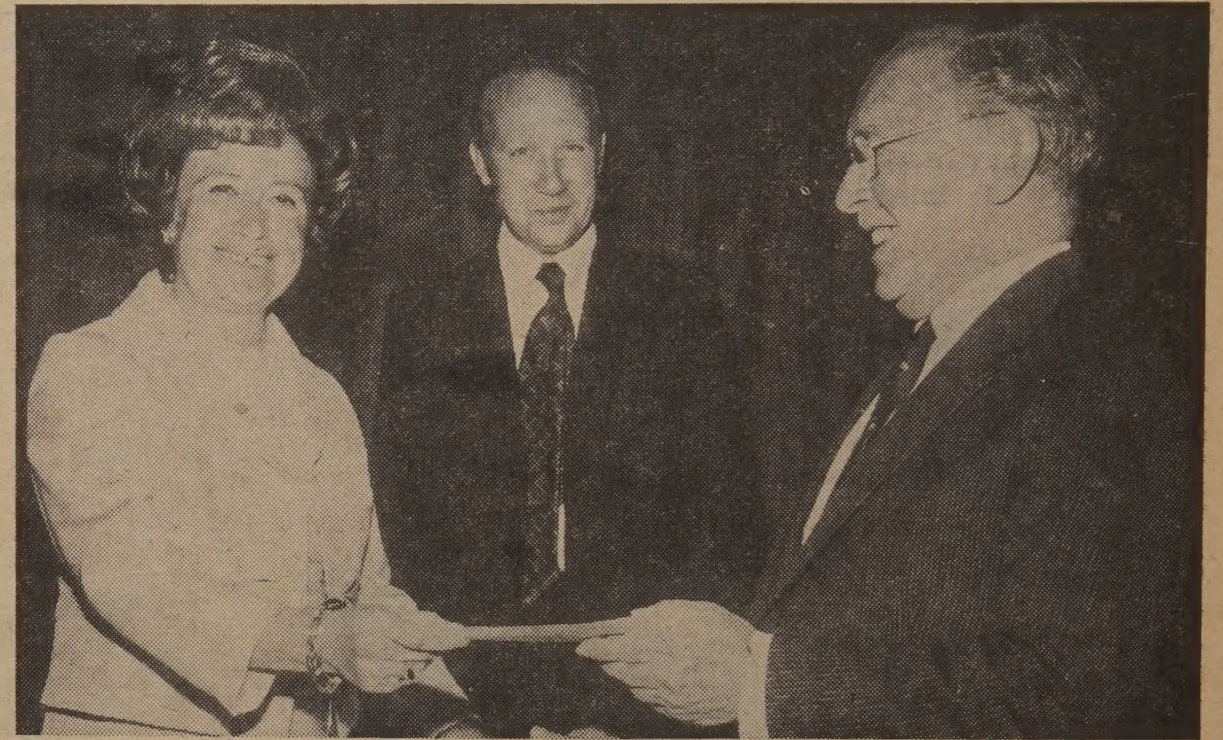
In his final summing up, Mr. Morris writes: "Belatedly Whitehall has come to recognise that one of the best ways of easing the strain on the hospital service is to extend and improve domiciliary care so that more and more severely handicapped people can live at home..."

The campaigning M.P., who has now been appointed Shadow Spokesman for the Department of Health and Social Security (Disabled), expresses his approach to disability in the closing words of the book:

"We must seek a society in which there is genuine respect for the handicapped; where understanding is unostenta-

tious and sincere; where if years cannot be added to the lives of the very sick, at least life can be added to their years; where needs come before means; where the mobility of disabled people is restricted only by the bounds of technical progress and discovery; where the handicapped have a fundamental right to participate in industry and society according to ability; where socially preventable distress is unknown; and where no man has cause to feel ill-at-ease because of his disability."

Anne Plummer



Life isn't a battle between "them" and "us"

THANK you for publishing (September issue of Spastics News) Rosemarie Osborne's "14-point plan to avoid being hurt by others." It was very thought provoking.

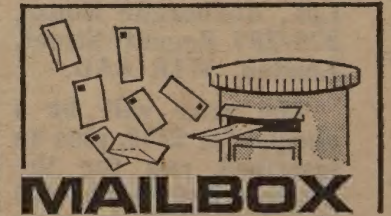
We appreciate that this article was written partly as a humorous glance at the social life of the author, and therefore some of the advice she gives for coping with some situations may not be supposed to be followed, word for word, by every handicapped person. We also realise that her reasons for drawing humour from other people are not intentionally malicious. Nevertheless, we feel that to refer to an unspecified percentage of the general public as stupid, four times in the course of one

article, needs more justification than is provided.

Because we are handicapped and are on the receiving end of many people's near hostility, we are tempted to blame an unknown race called the "others" for the alienation and every-man-for-himself spirit, which is in our society. Rarely do we consider that we have a part to play in creating more friendliness—we can just sit

and the "others." It need not be so, and it is up to us to prove it.

Judith Underwood,
Deri James,
Gillian Slow,
Richard Gomm,
Declan O'Keeffe,
Glenn Jackson,
Finian Heaney,
Thomas Delarue School,
Tonbridge,
Kent.



back and blame the "others," for the lack of it.

In this letter we are not trying to suggest that handicapped people should all become instant do-gooders—there is no need to apply for work at the local soup kitchen, or start a rehabilitation centre for drop outs—but when people in all sincerity want to help us; perhaps they are lonely people, who very much want to feel that they are needed; we don't see that we ought to reject them simply because their help is not essential.

Rosemarie says we ought to become insulted if a waitress in a restaurant cuts up our food for us: "Tell them you ordered a meal for an adult, not for a baby or a dog." If we were to have as little consideration for other people's feelings as to make comments such as this, then it would be hypocritical for us to expect sympathy or understanding from anyone.

We are sorry that some handicapped people view life as a constant battle between us

* * *
I AM editing a book for Heinemann Health Books of London on "Inexpensive Aids for the Disabled," and I am hoping you can be of assistance to me in this matter.

As you will realise from the title I am hoping to include as much information as possible on any simple aid (under about £8.00 to make or buy) which helps the disabled person in every aspect of his or her daily life. No matter how simple the idea I would welcome the chance of considering it for inclusion in the book, and to this end I wonder if you could assist me by publishing this letter in the next issue of your newspaper in the hope that your readers could send me suggestions.

Most of these aids will have been devised by friends or hospital departments and because of this other disabled people who could be helped by these ideas are ignorant of them. The idea of this book is to inform as many people as possible of the little ideas that could help make their lives a little easier or more enjoyable.

KEN WINTER,
14, Greenvale Drive,
Tisbury,
Bath,
Somerset.



Parishioners of St. Nicholas Church, Saltdean, Sussex, serve dinner to a party of spastic holidaymakers staying for a week in the church hall. This was the third annual holiday for adult spastics to be arranged by the people of Saltdean, and 24 guests enjoyed the church's hospitality.

A house of her own for Valda



● Mrs. Elsie Collyer pushes her daughter up the ramp into her bed-sitting room.

VALDA'S House was finished just in time for the summer holidays. Like any other 14-year-old, she was thrilled to be given her own home, complete with bed-sitting room, bathroom and hall.

"I think it's lovely," she told me, excitedly spelling out the letters on a special board, although the look on her face as she proudly showed off her house said more than words ever could.

For Valda is a spastic. The youngest of four children of Mrs. Elsie Collyer, of Fawcett Road, South-

sea, she is a bright and happy child.

Much of the credit for her happiness must go to her mother, whose unflinching courage and determination to give her daughter a full life has resulted in the transformation of some old garages at the bottom of the garden into Valda's house.

Widowed four years ago, Mrs. Collyer looked after her youngest daughter at home until just over a year ago, when she transferred from the Cerebral Palsy Unit at Queen Alexandra Hospital to The Spastics Society's boarding school for spastics, Craig-Y-Parc, Pent-yrch, near Cardiff.

How to cope

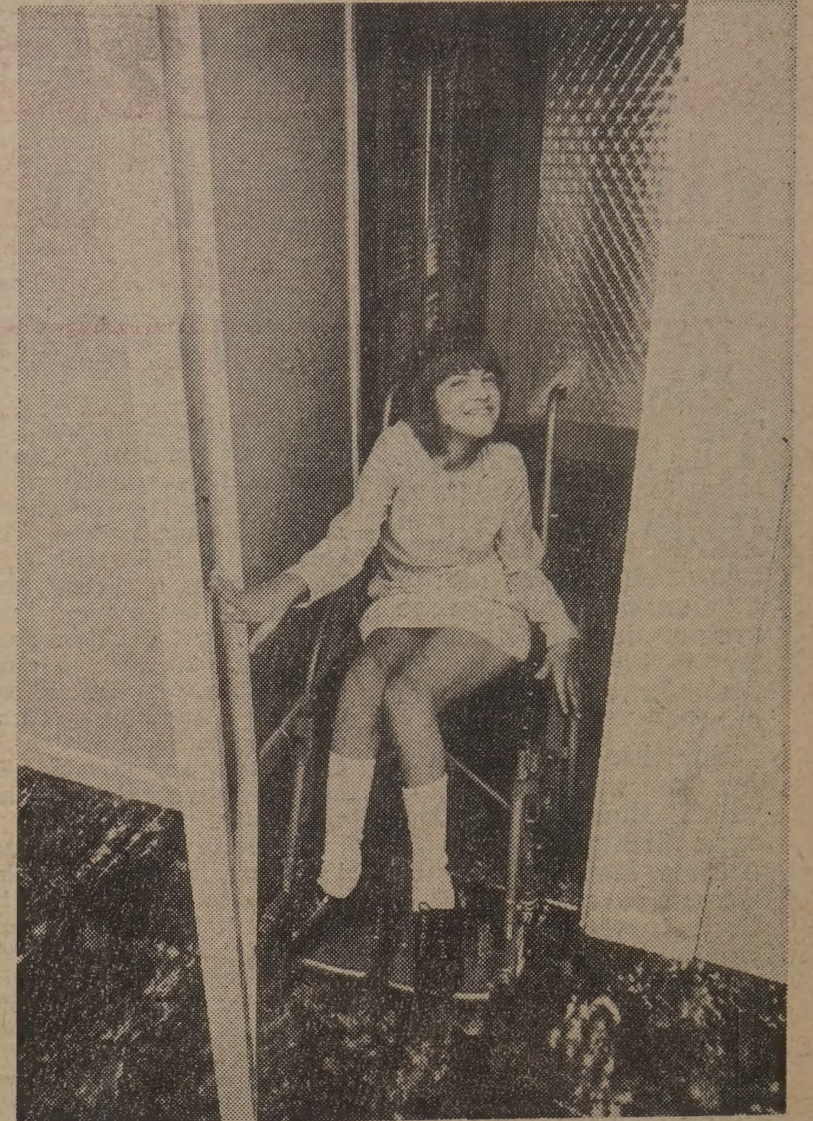
It was then that she began to wonder how she would cope with Valda when she leaves school in three years' time.

"Valda was getting very heavy, too heavy for me to lift and carry upstairs," she said. "Then I went to a home improvement exhibition and got the idea of converting the garages into a home for her."

She inquired about grants and found that she qualified for only a small amount towards the cost. Still determined to see her plan through, Mrs. Collyer contacted a former colleague of her late husband, Emsworth architect Miss Elizabeth Hollis, who designed the house.

Then began a hard struggle against bureaucracy and red tape.

"Eventually I arranged an interview with the City Development Officer, Mr. G. F. Heath, and I found him a most charming and sympathetic man."



● Valda can push open a two-way door which divides her bed-sitting room from the hall of her house.

The plans were passed. But Mrs. Collyer faced another hurdle — how was she going to raise more than £3,000? Before building could begin, the garages had to be demolished.

"I only had about £50 left to pay off my mortgage on my house, so the building society were very helpful and agreed to grant me a second mortgage."

You enter Valda's house via a path through the back garden and up a concrete ramp through a French door into an airy, comfortable bed-sitting room with a large picture window. Here Valda can read or play her transistor radio.

She can propel herself in her wheelchair through a two-way swing door into a hall off which is a specially adapted

bathroom for her own use. Through another door and she comes to a cloakroom with a ramp and exit to the street.

Over this door in Edmund Road is a sign which the builder made and asked to be put up there. It reads simply: "Valda's House."

Although it is Valda's own house, she cannot be left unattended and a polished wood staircase leads to another bedroom above her's, in which her mother sleeps when Valda is at home.

Linking the two rooms is a buzzer, so that mother can be called when needed.

Sometimes I wonder whether it was all worth it," said Mrs. Collyer. "Then I come in here and I realise that it was."

One glance at her daughter's smiling face should be reward enough.

Pictures and story by courtesy of The News, Portsmouth.



● Valda relaxes in her own little home which will give her such pleasure during holidays from the Society's Craig-y-Parc School, where she is a pupil. Mr. R. Jenkinson, the Society's Regional Social Worker for Valda's area, says he hopes the story of Valda will encourage other parents of spastic children to consult their local authorities about adaptations and improvements to their homes.

Last chance for Award

ALL nominations for The Spastics Society's special Achievement Award must be received by October 25, so if you have a candidate you would like to nominate, please let us have details as quickly as possible.

The Award is to be given for the most outstanding effort, or most meritorious achievement in any field in 1972 by a spastic over the age of 12. There are equal opportunities for sustained effort in, perhaps, particularly difficult circumstances, or the more spectacular burst of achievement.

If you want to make a nomination, please send your letter giving nominee's name, age, back-

ground and achievement, to Murray Milne Ltd., Roxburghe House, 273/287 Regent Street, London, W1R 8AD.

The prize will be a cheque for £250, plus an inscribed cup for the winner, and there will also be prizes for two runners-up. A panel of judges—all famous personalities in various fields of achievement—Stirling Moss, the Earl of Dalkeith, Henry Cooper, Baroness Masham, and Sir Geoffrey Jackson—will make the final decision, under the chairmanship of Mr. James Loring, who will advise on technical and other points.

Building workers called off strike after Society appeal

WHEN striking building workers heard from officials of The Spastics Society that the London site they were picketing was to provide homes for disabled people, they called off the stoppage and went back to work. They were told that the strike would cause hardship to the handicapped by delaying completion of the homes, and possibly by putting up rents.

Five days

The incident happened during the national building strike in September, and work was held up for five days on the site at Lordship Lane, Haringey, where the Society-sponsored Habinteg housing scheme is building a £50,000 development of maisonettes, houses and flats.

Miss Kathie Williams, administrative officer of Habinteg, went to the site, and appealed to the shop stewards to meet the Society's Assistant Director, Services, Mr. Derek Lancaster-Gaye, and hear of the hardship which would be caused to the disabled if the strike went on.

As a result Mr. David Bright, of the Union of Crafts and Allied Trades Technicians, and Mr. John Dawson, of the Transport and General Workers Union, visited the Society's

headquarters at Park Crescent. Mr. Lancaster-Gaye told Spastics News: "I was impressed by their willingness to listen to the problems we brought to their notice. I told them that many disabled people were living in very bad conditions and were longing for the chance of a decent home at Haringey. As a result the pickets were called off, and the 50 men involved went back to work next morning."

The Union officials also met the Society's Director, Mr. James Loring, and in gratitude for their co-operation. Mr. Bright and Mr. Dawson were invited to the official opening of the estate which is scheduled for next Spring.

Picture below shows the headquarters meeting. From left to right: Mr. Loring, Mr. Lancaster-Gaye, Mr. Dawson and Mr. Bright.



SAD LOSS TO SEMBAL TRUST

WE deeply regret to record the death of Admiral Sir Alexander Bingley, G.C.B., O.B.E., Secretary of The Sembal Trust since April, 1964.

Obituary notices and an appreciation will appear in the next issue of Spastics News.

TOP GROUPS FOR BIG S.O.S.

TOP of the current pops, Slade and Blackfoot Sue, will appear at the forthcoming Wembley Music Festival, in aid of the Stars Organisation for Spastics. Both groups are giving their services free to help the cause.

Blackfoot Sue, who wear Red Indian-style make-up, will play their own compositions.

Slade, another all-male quartet, will interrupt a European tour to play home for the Wem-

POP FESTIVAL

bley show. They were recently voted 'Group of the Year' by Radio Luxembourg.

The two-day festival, sponsored by the Daily Express, will be held at the Empire Pool, Wembley, on 28th-29th October. Tickets, priced £1 and £2, are available from Empire Pool Box Office, Wembley, Middx.